

New Director Focuses on Females

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J. David Donahue,
Commissioner

This week, the Indiana Department of Corrections named Dana Blank as the statewide Director of Female Adult and Juvenile Programs. As the program’s first director, Blank will extend female programming and re-entry initiatives in Indiana’s first gender-based corrections role.

“I think we have a great opportunity to promote a strong re-entry component for females,” says Indiana DOC Commissioner J. David Donahue. “We’re working to improve potential outcomes for these women. I am of the humble opinion that gender issues are very important in corrections and we have a responsibility to address that.”

Blank will work to improve re-entry services to help female offenders with a seamless return to their communities. Additionally, Blank will work to establish new and innovative programs that reconnect children with their incarcerated mothers.

“We see a lot of moms who come into corrections and cannot engage in their child’s lives,” says Donahue. “There are many barriers if an offender chooses to become a part of their child’s progress. We have to support connections between incarcerated mothers and local school systems. Whether it’s through teleconferencing or phone conversations, we need to support that relationship for mothers.”

Donahue adds that Blank will be responsible for changing the way female offender programs work. The state offers many re-entry and gender-specific programs, and Blank will work towards ensuring that every program is offered at each facility.

“For the last 15-months, we have been re-evaluating our system,” says Donahue. “All too often in corrections, we do things because that’s the way they have always been done. We don’t want to just maintain processes in Indiana; if something works, we’ll keep doing it, but if not we have to step back and make changes.”

With a new focus on gender-specific programs, and Blank’s new position, Donahue says the IDOC is prepared to make a change.

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About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department’s home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department’s Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.